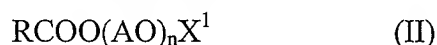


AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1-9. (Canceled)

10. **(Currently amended)** A method of activating a plant by applying to a plant a plant-activating composition comprising a plant-activating agent and a fertilizer component, said plant-activating agent is a compound of formula (II),



wherein R represents an alkyl or alkenyl group having 13 to 29 carbon atoms;  $\text{X}^1$  represents a hydrogen atom, an alkyl or acyl group having 1 to 30 carbon atoms or an alkenyl group having 2 to 30 carbon atoms; AO represents at least one group selected from oxyethylene, oxypropylene and oxybutylene groups and may be random or block; n represents an average number of moles added and is zero to 30; and wherein the plant-activating agent is in an aqueous solution or aqueous dispersion and is in a concentration of 0.01 to 500 ppm,

wherein when n is zero in formula (II),  $\text{X}^1$  is a hydrogen atom, ~~an alkyl or acyl group having 1-30 carbon atoms or an alkenyl group having 2-30 carbon atoms,~~ and

wherein when n is 1 to 30 in formula (II),  $\text{X}^1$  is an alkyl or acyl group having 1-30 carbon atoms or an alkenyl group having 2-30 carbon atoms.

11-15. (Canceled)

16. (Previously Presented) The method of activating a plant as claimed in claim 10, wherein said composition comprises 10 to 5,000 parts by weight of the fertilizer component per 100 parts by weight of the activating agent.

17. (Canceled)

18. (Previously Presented) The method of activating a plant as claimed in claim 16, wherein said composition further comprises 10 to 5,000 parts by weight of other nutrients per 100 parts by weight of the activating agent.

19-29. (Canceled)

30. (Previously Presented) The method of activating a plant as claimed in claim 10, wherein R represents an alkyl or alkenyl group having 15 to 29 carbon atoms.

31. (Previously presented) The method of activating a plant as claimed in claim 10, wherein the plant activating composition further comprises a surfactant which is at least one selected from the group consisting of: sorbitan fatty acid esters, polyoxyalkylene sorbitan fatty acid esters, polyoxyalkylene fatty acid esters, polyoxyalkylene glycerol fatty acid esters, polyglycerol fatty acid esters, polyoxyalkylene polyglycerol fatty acid esters, sucrose fatty acid esters, resin acid esters, polyoxyalkylene resin acid esters, polyoxyalkylene alkyl ethers, polyoxyalkylene alkylphenyl ethers, polyoxyalkylenealkyl(poly)glycosides, polyhydric carboxylic acid salts, polyoxyalkylene alkyl ether carboxylic acid salts, polyoxyalkylene alkylamide ether carboxylic acid salts, rhodinic acid salts, alkylbenzenesulfonates, alkyl sulfonates, alkyl naphthalenesulfonates, naphthalenesulfonates, diphenyl ether sulfonic acid salts, condensates of alkyl naphthalenesulfonates, condensates of naphthalenesulfonates, alkyl sulfates, polyoxyalkylene alkyl sulfates, polyoxyalkylene alkyl phenyl ether sulfuric acid salts, tristyrenated phenol sulfuric acid ester salts, polyoxyalkylene distyrenated phenol sulfuric acid ester salts, alkylpolyglycoside sulfuric acid salts, alkylphenylphosphoric acid ester salts, polyoxyalkylene alkylphosphoric acid ester salts, polyoxyalkylene alkylphenylphosphoric acid ester salts, amino acid group-containing surfactants, betaine group-containing surfactants, imidazoline group-containing surfactants, amine oxide group-containing surfactants and acylamino acid salts.